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THE LITTLE CLASSIC SERIES.

The
Bluebird
Book

A. FLANAGAN COMPANY

The Little Classic Series

The most popular works of standard authors and poets arranged for use in schools, with introductions, explanatory notes, biographical sketches, portraits, and illustrations. Also elementary stories of nature, myth, history, industry, geography, biography, and literature. The grading suggested has been extensively followed by teachers with very satisfactory results, but may be varied to suit special conditions.

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CHICAGO

The Bluebird Book

owned
BY
N. MOORE BANTA
"

1923

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THE STORY OF THE BLUEBIRD

Let us look at this pretty little bird. Isn't it a beautiful blue? Its name is Bluebird.

The Bluebird belongs to the Thrush Family. It is a little larger than any of the little Wrens.

But the Bluebird is a small bird. It is only seven inches long.

Mr. and Mrs. Bluebird are the same size, but they are not the same color. Mr. Bluebird's upper parts, wings, and tail are bright blue. His breast is a rich chestnut-brown. Underneath he is white.

Mrs. Bluebird has duller blue feathers, washed with gray. She has a paler breast than Mr. Bluebird.

Bluebirds go to the south in the late autumn. They do not take this trip till November. They go north in the early spring. They make this trip to the north in March.

Bluebirds can stand quite a little cold weather. Many times we have snow after the Bluebirds come north.

Many times sleet and cold rains come.

Then we should feed them. They do not mind the cold. But they must have food.

It sometimes gets cold in the autumn before Bluebirds go south. They stay with us as long as they can. It is good-bye to summer when they go.

Bluebirds are very fine singers. Their song is a beautiful sweet warble. They warble a song of gladness. They warble a merry song of cheer.

They tell us summer is coming. They tell us springtime is here.

They sing, "Little white snowdrop, wake up! Bright yellow crocus, open your eyes. Daffodils, don't you hear? Summer is coming.

"Sweet little violets are coming. Buttercups and daisies are coming. Springtime is here."

Sing, Bluebird, warble a song of sunshine. Warble a merry song of glee. Warble a merry roundelay.

Bring us a message of cheer. Bring us sunny hours. Bring us sunny days.

Sing of the lilacs and roses. Sing of the leaves on the trees. Sing of flowers and sunshine.

Warble us a song of the beautiful rainbow.



BLUEBIRD.
[ONE-HALF LIFE SIZE.]

Warble of the happy hours. Warble of the happy days.

Sing us a message of cheer. Tell us summer is coming and springtime is here.

Who sings a message of cheer? The Bluebird sings a message of cheer.

Who sings of the springtime and summer? The Bluebird sings of the springtime and summer.

He sings of sunshine and happy hours. He sings of sunny days and beautiful flowers.

Bluebirds like to build their nests in bird houses. We should put up bird houses for them. We should protect them from the English sparrows.

Bluebird houses should be put up early. They should be up by the first of March.

Bluebirds like to live near our homes. They like to live in the garden or orchard. They will build their nests in tree-holes if they can't find bird houses.

Sometimes they will build in holes about buildings. We can have these beautiful songsters about our homes. But we must put up bird houses. We must chase the Sparrows away.

The nest of the Bluebird is very simple. It is made of a few wisps of straw. Sometimes

it is lined with a few feathers.

The Bluebird lays from four to six eggs. The eggs are pale blue. In a short time the nest contains little baby Bluebirds.

At first these little baby birds are blind. They are almost naked. How helpless they are!

Soon they grow a suit of dark feathers. They look almost black. Then a speckled vest appears. They do not have any blue feathers till they are able to fly.

Bluebirds eat many insects. They feed insect food to the baby birds. They catch the insects in the orchard. They catch the insects in the garden.

They raise two and three broods of baby birds each year. It takes many insects to feed so many baby Bluebirds. This is why Bluebirds are so useful.

We will put up houses for them. We will protect them.

BLUEBIRD'S FIRST SONG

“Awake,” said the sunshine,

“ ’Tis time to get up,

Awake! pretty daisy,

And sweet buttercup.

“Why! you’ve been sleeping
The whole winter long:
Hark! Hark! don’t you hear?
’Tis the Bluebird’s song.”

“Awake,” call the streamlets,
“We’ve lain here so still,
And now we must all
Go to work with a will.”

“Awake,” said the warm little breeze,
“And you, willow tree,
Come put on your leaves
In a twinkling, for me.”

“Awake,” breathed the air
From the blue sky above,
“Awake, for the world
Is all beauty and love.

“Wake, little Bluebirds,
So merry and dear;
Ah! what were the springtime,
If your song were not here?”

—Selected.

BONNY, BONNY BLUEBIRD

Bonny, bonny Bluebird,
Living in the wood.
Come, we will not harm you,
But give you something good.

Let us see if he will come
For this great ripe purple plum;
“Singing, singing cheerily,
Here I come so merrily,
Thank you, children dear!”

Bonny, bonny Bluebird,
Sing a song of cheer,
Sing a song of roses,
Lasting half a year.

Sing a song of summer days,
Carol us a hymn of praise;
“Chirping, chirping cheerily,
Here I come so merrily,
Thank you, children dear!”

—Adapted.

SONG OF THE BLUEBIRD

I know the song
That the Bluebird is singing,

Up in the appletree
Where he is swinging.

Brave little fellow!
The skies may look dreary,
Nothing cares he
While his heart is so cheery.

Hark! how the music
Leaps out from his throat!
Hark! was there ever
So merry a note?

Listen awhile and you'll
Hear what he's saying,
Up in the appletree,
Swinging and swaying:

“Dear little blossoms
Down under the snow,
You must be weary
Of winter, I know.

“Hark! while I sing you
A message of cheer
Summer is coming,
And springtime is here.

“Little white snowdrop,
I pray you, arise;
Bright yellow crocus,
Come, open your eyes.

“Sweet little violets,
Hid from the cold,
Put on your mantles
Of purple and gold!

“Daffodils! daffodils!
Say, do you hear?
Summer is coming,
And springtime is here!”

—Emily Huntington Miller.

THE BLUEBIRD AND THE CHILDREN

Bluebird:

How do you do, children? I know you.
You are little boys. You are little girls.
You are little children.

How do you do, little boys? How do you
do, little girls? Do you know me?
See my blue coat. See my blue cap. See
my brown vest.

My coat is bright blue. My cap is bright
blue. My vest is rich brown.

Now you know me. I am Mr. Bluebird. I

am a little bird. I am only seven inches long.

Mrs. Bluebird looks like me. Her coat and cap are pale blue. Her vest is pale brown.

Ruth:

I like your pretty blue cap and coat. I like your rich brown vest. You are a pretty little bird. You sing a very pretty song.

Bob:

I like your sweet song. You sing a song of joy. Where is Mrs. Bluebird?

Bluebird:

Mrs. Bluebird is at home. We built a nest. We built the nest of straw. We lined it with feathers. We built it in a bird house. A little boy built the bird house for us.

Soon there were six little eggs in our nest. They were little pale blue eggs.

Now there are six baby Bluebirds in the nest. We like to feed our baby birds. We catch worms for them. Worms are good for baby Bluebirds.

Joe:

When do you go south, Mr. Bluebird?
Why don't you stay here?

Bluebird:

We go south in November. We go north in March. It is too cold in winter in the north. We like warm weather. We like the summer in the north. We like the winter in the south.

Clara:

Please sing again, Mr. Bluebird. Sing your sweet song over. Sing your song of joy again. Sing your song of morning. Please sing it over and over.

Elmer:

Sing about the morning dew. Tell us about the flowers. Tell us again and again. Thank you, Mr. Bluebird. We shall never harm you.

SUMMER IS COMING

A Bluebird sat on a tree and sang,
"Summer is coming, coming;"
A bee crept out of its hive and began
Lazily humming, humming.

The frog from out of the rushes and leaves,
Into the water went splashing;
The dragon fly with its body of green,
Through the tall flags went splashing.

The squirrel put out her head and said,
 “Really the sun shines brighter!”
But the butterfly said, “Not yet, not yet!”
 And folded his wings up tighter.

But the Robin and Bluebird began to sing,
 Ever sweeter and sweeter,
And the grasshopper chirped and hopped and
 skipped,
 Ever fleeter and fleeter.

And suddenly brighter the sun shone out,
 And the clouds away went sailing,
And the sheep nibbled the soft green grass,
 The cow looked over the paling.

Yes, summer had come, the Cuckoo sang
 Songs through woodland and hollow,
The summer has come, I hear it sung,
 Not only by Thrush but Swallow.

—Selected.

THE STORY OF THE GOLDFINCH

See the little yellow bird! Little yellow
bird, I see you. Don't be afraid, little yellow
bird. I will not harm you.

Do look at this little bird! It is not afraid
of us. It knows we will not harm it.



THE GOLDFINCH

It is a pretty little Goldfinch.

The Goldfinch is one of the prettiest members of the Finch family. It is sometimes called the Wild Canary. Yellowbird is another name for it. Other times it is called the Thistle Bird.

It likes to eat thistle seeds. That is why it is called the Thistle Bird.

The Goldfinch is a very small bird. It is a little larger than the House Wren.

The Goldfinch is a little over five inches long. This is the length from the tip of his bill to the tip of his tail.

What a pretty bird he is! His color is bright yellow. Look at the top of his head. Look at his wings and tail. What color are they?

The top of his head is black. His wings and tail are black.

Mrs. Goldfinch is not as beautiful as Mr. Goldfinch. She does not have as beautiful feathers. She is brownish olive above. Below she is yellowish white.

Goldfinches go south in the autumn. They go in October. They stay in the south all winter.

They go north in the spring. They go

north in May. They stay in the north all summer.

A few of them stay in the north all winter. They do not stay in the colder parts of the north. They stay in the warmer parts of the north.

We like to hear the Goldfinch sing. Sing, pretty Goldfinch, sing. Sing us a sweet song. Sing us a May song.

It makes us happy to hear you sing.

Who can sing a sweet May song? The Goldfinch can sing us a sweet May song. Do let us hear it sing!

Do you hear it sing its beautiful song? It is singing a song of the warm summer. It is singing of the clear blue sky. It is singing of the warm breezes.

Here is what it is singing:

“Beautiful flowers, I am glad to see you. Flowers, flowers growing everywhere. I will sing to you. You make us all glad. You fill the air with sweetness.

“Come, happy days. Come, sunny hours. Come, sunshine and warm rain.

“Bring the sweet little violets. Bring the pretty daisies. Bring the beautiful butter-cups.

“Make the roses bloom. Make the lilacs

bloom. Make all the flowers bloom.

“I sing of the leaves on the trees. I sing a message of cheer. I sing joyfully. I sing merrily.

“Pretty rainbow, I sing to you. See the bright morning sun! See the sparkling dew!”

Pretty little Goldfinch, we like to hear you sing. Sing your sweet song over and over.

The song of the Goldfinch is much like the song of the Canary bird. That is why the Goldfinch is called Wild Canary.

Goldfinches use fine grasses to build their nests. They use strips of bark. They use moss. They line their nests thickly with thistledown.

The nests are built in trees or bushes. The Goldfinch lays from three to six eggs. The eggs are of a pale bluish-white.

Soon the eggs are gone. Baby Goldfinches are in the nest. The eggs turned into Baby Goldfinches.

The father and mother Goldfinches catch caterpillars. They catch grasshoppers. They catch many other harmful insects.

They feed the baby birds. They feed them many insects. The baby birds are so hungry.

It takes so many insects to feed them.

They cannot get enough. The old birds come to the nest. Open go the mouths of the baby birds.

In drop the insects. The baby birds swallow the insects. Away fly the old birds for more insects.

Goldfinches are very fond of weed-seeds. Goldfinches are our friends. They help the farmer and the gardener.

They eat many harmful insects. They eat many harmful weed-seeds.

They are beautiful birds. They sing sweet songs. They sing us sweet songs of joy. Their songs make us happy.

We like to have the Goldfinches live near us. We will protect them.

LITTLE WILD CANARY

Little Wild Canary

Dainty warbler sweet.

Something in the basket,

We have for you to eat.

Birdie likes the little seeds,

That is plainly what he needs:

“Trilling, trilling cheerily,

Here I come so merrily,

Thank you, children dear!”

Sing a song of something
Very good to eat;
Sing about the bugs you like,
And the golden wheat.

Trill a song of a day in June,
Trill a song of the honey-bloom:
“Singing, singing, cheerily,
Here I come so merrily,
Thank you, children dear!”

—Adapted.

LITTLE BRIGHT YELLOWBIRD

Little bright yellowbird!
You pretty little fellow,
With your wings of black,
And your coat of yellow.

Little black tail,
Little black crown,
What a pretty sight
Amid the thistle-down!

Little Wild Canary,
What a sweet delight!
To see you on the lawn
When the sun is bright.

Sing a pretty song
Of bright sunny hours,

Trill a little song
Of beautiful flowers.

Sing a song of blossoms
Up in the trees;
Sing of the springtime,
And the warm breeze.

Warble a song
Of the sparkling dew,
Of sweet little daisies,
And the violets blue.

Tell of the Mayflowers,
And the roses of June!
Put in a strawberry
To sweeten the tune.

THE CATBIRD

Ellen:

Do see this bird! It has a black cap. Its
coat and vest are dark gray.

Henry:

The feet and bill are black. The tail is also
black.

Ira:

I saw its nest. There are four eggs in it.
The eggs are greenish blue.

Elly:

The nest is made of twigs, shavings, and grass. It is lined with fine rootlets. I think you are Mr. Catbird.

Catbird:

Yes, that is my name. I am longer than the Wood Thrush. I am nine inches long. I am watching our nest.

Mrs. Catbird has gone for her dinner. She will soon be back. The eggs in our nest will soon turn to baby Catbirds.

We shall then have much work to do. The baby birds must be fed. We must work hard to feed them. Baby Catbirds like bugs and worms.

Our baby birds will soon grow up. We shall not have so much to do then. They can take care of themselves. In November we shall all go to the south. In May we shall return to the north.

Emma:

You are a useful bird. You eat many harmful insects.

Joe:

I like your song. You can mock other birds. Carol the spring song of the Bluebird.



THE CATBIRD

Claude:

Sing the song of the Brown Thrasher.
Carol the summer song of the Robin.
Sing the sweet song of the Wood Thrush.
Sing loud and clear like Jenny Wren.

Lucy:

Carol a song of April showers. Carol a
song of the April morning. Sing a song
of the evening. Sing of the golden sun-
set. Sing the jolly song of the Chicka-
dee.

Ralph:

Sing about the apple blossoms. Tell us of
the summer days. Tell us of the sum-
mer hours.

Dorothy:

Sing a song of flowers and sunshine. Sing
a song of summer breezes.

Genevieve:

Sing about the sweet violets. Thank you,
Mr. Catbird. You are a useful bird.

George:

We shall always protect you. Never be
afraid of us. We are your friends.

THE STORY OF THE INDIGO BUNTING

See this pretty blue bird! What a beauti-
ful shade of blue! It is as beautiful as the

Bluebird. It is the Indigo Bunting. It is also called the Indigo Bird.

The Indigo Bunting belongs to the Finch family. He is a cousin to the Goldfinch and Redbird. They are three cousin Finches. They do not look much alike. They are so different in color.

The Indigo Bunting is much smaller than the Redbird. This Indigo Bird is only a little larger than the Goldfinch. It is five and one-half to six inches long. This measure is taken from the tip of the bill to the tip of the tail.

These Finches are quite a little alike in habits. They all have thick stout bills. They can eat seeds that are hard to crack.

The color of the Indigo Bunting is indigo blue. That is why this bird is called the Indigo Bunting or Indigo Bird.

The color of Mrs. Indigo Bunting is very different from that of Mr. Indigo Bunting. She is of a brownish color. She has a little touch of blue on her shoulders and tail.

Indigo Buntings go south for the winter. They go south in September. They spend their summers in the north. They go north in the month of May.

The Indigo Bunting is a jolly summer

songster. His song is a beautiful little warble. It is, indeed, very sweet. It contains many Canary-like notes.

He sings us a song of the gardens and orchards. He sings a song of apple blossoms. He warbles of honeysuckles and hollyhocks. He sings joyfully and merrily.

Little Indigo Bunting, sing a song of the May morning. Sing a song of cherry blossoms. Sing a song of morning glories. Sing a song of sunflowers. Warble a song of the glad sunrise. Warble of summer flowers. Warble of summer showers.

Tell us of the little white snowdrops. Tell us of the bright yellow crocus. Tell us of happy hours. Tell us of happy days. Sing of the beautiful rainbow. Sing of the golden sunset.

Indigo Buntings build their nests about the first of June. They build them of grasses. They build them of bits of dead leaves. They also use strips of bark. The nests are lined with grasses, rootlets and long hairs.

They locate their nests in low bushes. They like haw and brier bushes best. Three to four are the number of eggs laid. The eggs are of pale bluish-white. The eggs hatch in about twelve days.



THE INDIGO BUNTING

What a stir these baby Buntings cause! My! but they are hungry! The old birds have to work fast now. They are kept busy hunting insects. They carry the insects to their baby Buntings. How quickly the insects disappear. Then the baby Buntings cry for more. The old birds feed them fast.

The baby Buntings grow fast. When the baby Buntings are ten days old they can fly. Very soon they are able to take care of themselves. Then the old birds raise another brood of baby Buntings.

Indigo Buntings are seed eaters. They eat many small berries. They are fond of insects. They help the farmer and the gardener. They eat weed seeds and insects. This is the way they help the farmer and the gardener.

Birds help protect plant life. This is why they are so useful. This is why we should protect them. Indigo Buntings are sweet songsters. They are very beautiful birds. We will always protect them.

A LITTLE BLUE BIRD

A little blue bird

Sat on a fence rail,
Cheerily, cheerily singing!

Its song was the sweetest
That I ever heard,
Cheerily, cheerily singing!

I ran for some salt
To put on his tail,
Cheerily, cheerily singing!

But while I was gone,
Away flew the bird,
Cheerily, cheerily singing!
—Adapted.

BUNTINGS IN THE GREENWOOD

Buntings in the greenwood
Sing so sweet and clear,
Warbling in the greenwood
'Tis their song we hear;

Buntings in the greenwood
Build a little nest,
Leave it in the greenwood
Ready for the rest.

Buntings in the greenwood
Sing themselves to sleep,
Slumber in the greenwood
Must be sweet and deep.

Buntings in the greenwood
Sing at break of day;
Warble of the greenwood,
And the flowers of May.
—Adapted.

THE MOCKINGBIRD AND THE CHILDREN

Dan:

See this pretty bird friend. I know you,
Mr. Mockingbird. You wear a gray coat
and cap. You wear a light gray vest.

Eva:

You are about the size of the Robin. Mrs.
Mockingbird looks just like you. She has
a gray coat and cap. She has a light gray
vest.

Ralph:

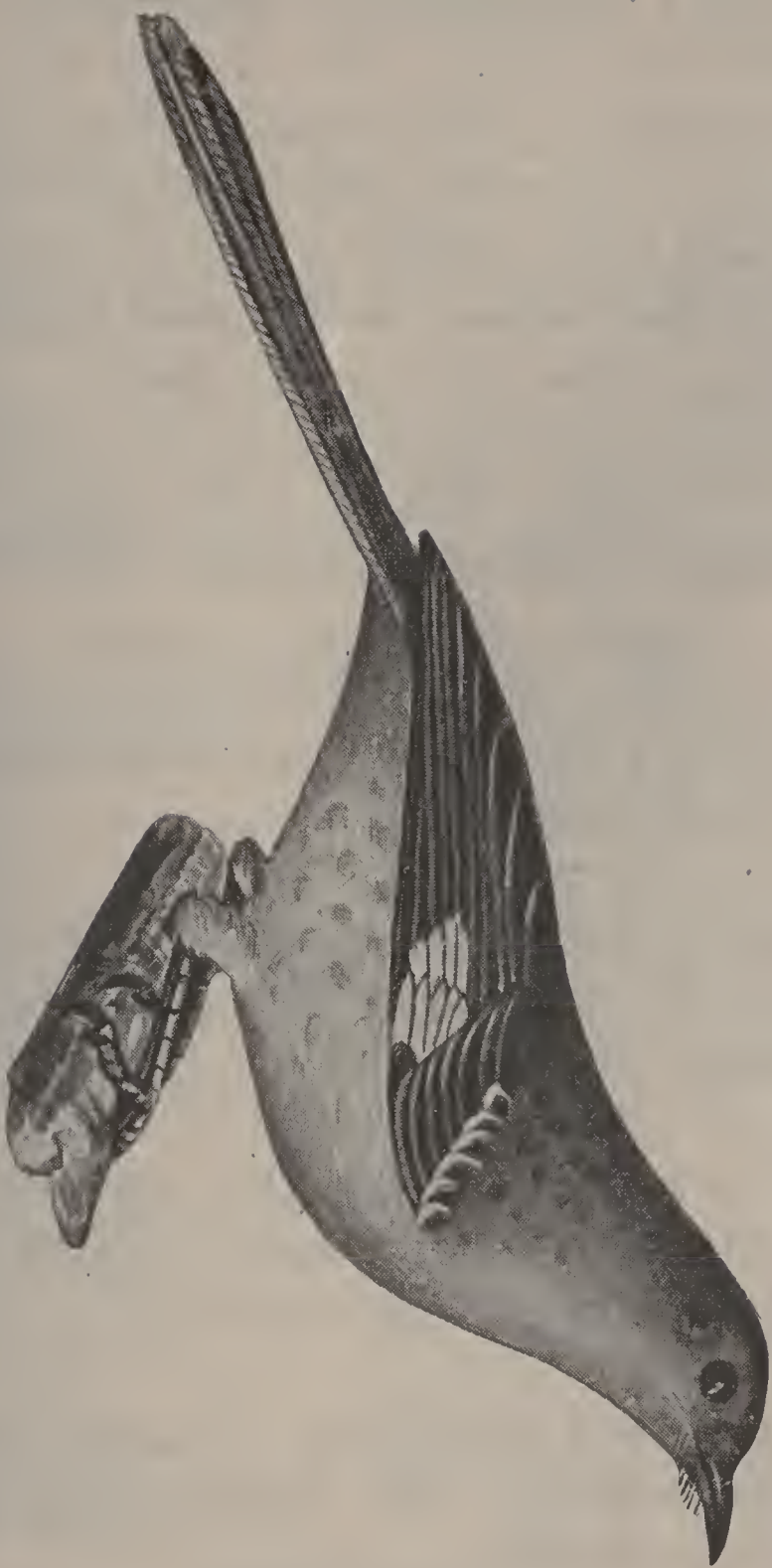
Tell us about your home, Mr. Mockingbird.

Mockingbird:

We built our nest of grass and twigs. We
lined it with horsehair and cotton. We
built it in a hedge. It is only a few feet
from the ground.

There were four speckled green eggs in the
nest. Now there are four baby Mock-
ingbirds. Mrs. Mockingbird is at home
watching the baby birds.

THE MOCKINGBIRD



I am out hunting worms for them. We must keep at work to find enough worms. Our baby birds never get enough to eat. I must take a little time to sing. I like to sing. I like to mock the other birds. Catbird is my cousin. We can both mock the other birds. Now I shall sing you my song. How do you like that?

Laura:

That was fine. Sing it again, please. You sang like the Bluebird and the Robin.

Paul:

You sang like the Wood Thrush and the Catbird. Please come and sing often. We like to hear you.

Frank:

Carol a song of the peach blossoms. Sing one of the cherry trees. Carol of the pussy willows.

Sarah:

Trill a merry song of the morning. Trill joyfully. Trill merrily. Carol a song of the blossoms on the trees.

Claude:

That was a fine song. Thank you, Mr. Mockingbird. We shall always protect Mockingbirds.

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